

Mechanicsburg. Nov. 10th 46.

I have just escaped from the clasp of two drunkards in the barroom of the depot and stake advantage of the hour before the Cars arrive to write you half a page, first acknowledging the receipt of your short but no less welcome date of July 9. To my surprise you say in it that you have had none from me since December last. I got it yesterday. Three weeks ago I rec^d. one from you dated July 22. in which you speak of mine by a Baltimore ship. The first page of your 22nd July I partially answered in a double sheet sent also by a Balt. ship through Mrs. White's kind inquiries. The same carried your longhose out, from which may you rec. much comfort. I wish I were living in one of our Seaboard Cities, for I could then do some thing towards moderating the unpleasantness of your voluntary exile, as well as others. I should send you many a paper & pamphlet & book of interest to you, leaving to your untiring friend in Dunsmst to furnish your thanks acc^d to order. Now I feel too "blue" today after my Sabbath's duties & a Monday's still more severe in way of collecting & again preaching — and too downhearted at such small proceeds of such great exertion, to attempt even to amuse you. — Another question of Earnesty suggests itself. Must we always do and pay just as we feel, or incur the charge of hypocrisy? Among our Transcendental folks in "northern Germanic regions", it is a stone in their fundamental mosaic of self-dedication, — to do just as one pleases. Hence a young lady in Phil^a. an intimate friend of the Boston Parkers assured me that she most admired that one of her friends, who when he visited her would sit and talk to her if he liked, or go to the table if he liked, without so much as a howdy do and spend an hour absorbed over a book. Spontaneity — that is the watchword. I take this to be an abomination. What is duty? Pleasure? What ought one to do; what is right to do? That which is most pleasant to you. — Such is transcendent chatechetical instruction. This claims however, as a fundamental law of moral action, a place even among much higher and purer systems of theology. It is becoming quite a favorite sentiment in many quarters that the external should signify (& that because the product of) the internal. You would see this in the first ^{article} ~~number~~ of the Nov. no. of the Princeton Rev. (written by the Rev. Dr. Yerman) on Forms of Worship. It is the recognized basis of Krummacker's view of the obligation & mode of observance of the Sabbath. It operates extensively to prevent regular family worship & the ass^{ly} abiding at meals, among the pious European ministers. They dread the slavery and the hardening process of regular forms of worship. They wish all religion to be spontaneous in its expression.

a practical Commentary perhaps, on that "Is any merry let him sing psalms, is any sad, let him pray." I think, David, we have in this again one of the numerous cases of the importance of finding out le juste milieu. The extreme of transcendental selfwill, wayward, spontaneous lawfulness from without, is worse indeed than the op. extreme of bald, cheerful slavery to inflexible forms wherein the soul works in bonds, or is cramped to take a shape, (for the purpose generally of promoting that abhorred uniformity, which so many - may all men naturally - mistake for unity); yet surely we may strike a mean and to some extent - do as we please, under law. Religion doubtless will be most beautiful, always, when most spontaneous in its play of feature & motion of limb. Heaven will be a place of exquisite enjoyment in this respect.

I am again writing you a sermon instead of answering your letter. But my head aches and the Cars are almost here and another time I'll have another train of thought and tell you more about myself, of course the most interesting person in the world. Adios, Amigo.

Nov. 12th. We are floating up the North Branch canal, after passing a wretched night in a crowd of lumbermen, and if I left off above with a head ache, I certainly begin with one this morning.

Are you not a little pained when you say your opinion of men was that heaven would be useful and by his last act that opinion is confirmed? Many a man (may we not think it?) is shaken gradually into his proper position and only then reaches his point of influence and becomes truly useful when he has found his place. Do we not often say, "such ^{such} a man has mistaken his calling"? Are we then, not a calling in thought as well as in deed? Has not every man some degree of individuality ~~to~~ ^{to} his susceptibility to certain parts and domains & phases of truth? I verily believe that uniformity is hateful to Deity. Nothing is uniform in the universe ~~except~~ beyond a certain point. Look at the Church, how often its form has been changed by its Head ~~himself~~ and how it now resembles a well-ordained army separated into its battalions & companies and marching forward in different lines, accordg to the nature of the ground & position of its foes. May we not therefore rejoice in Schism, instead of damning it with eternal thunders, as our Presbytr & Wesleytic friends are wont to do? I love the multiformity of the Church's parts. And

Mercer may well be of the number of those who find rest in the
bosom of "The Church" as the Centre ^{where} of all their attractions, ^{at least} & the passions
neutralize each other, and have shown themselves susceptible & honest
enough to find themselves at last at it. I love a renegade ^{who} makes
nothing but a fortune of reproaches by his envenom, and takes his
own destined Kingdom of truth & action, by main force of conscience.
It is noised that the celebrated Schlegel, a gone out star in the
philosophical world of Germany, has formerly renounced Christianity
and in a letter to a noble lady professes to be "a seeker", quite dis-
passionate, unprejudiced & patient of the arrival of his friend, the Truth,
from unknown regions. So much for one who begins wisdom at the
second step, instead of the first. A man who has never come
through the wicket gate may after a time easily persuade him-
self that none such stands at the head of the way.

Why do few who enter the Epis. board's ^{little} "do good to themselves
and it?" Why are there so few black stars? The truth is they
are forced by the vitious tone of feeling in society, into a false
position. They are at once sneered at and reviled & goaded to
make resistance & retreat. Then whatever they may say is taken
as proof positive of impuility & ill nature. If they say nothing
they are silent. Their struggle has been upon those very mooted
subjects about which henceforward both they feel themselves bet-
ter able and the world denies them all ability to speak, and
of ^{which they are} "disqualified". Silence is their wisdom but there is an
element of folly in the highest wisdom of our race, and silence
they naturally court for crime, thinking that what has cost them
so dear must be of value to all mankind.

And yet David Sprague that in one sense entering the
Episcopal ch. is a plain evidence of weakness, since none but
a weak man will place undue importance upon a minor
point. There may be men however who understand this to be
a minor point with the desire to be right on minor points also,
or are satisfied to make excuse of this for altering ^{their} position
in the Church, ^{general} rendered uncomfortable to them in other ways.
I suppose Mercer had been driven from our body by personal
feeling — chiefly hatred of dogmatic tyranny in any supposable
form.

As we are on theological ground let me say a word about the meetings of Reverends I have lately attended. I can't remember whether I was or you since being at Carlisle or not. I attended the Gen. Synod of Pa. there three weeks ago. It was expected that the two Bull dogs D^r Shaf and D^r Berg would then & there worry each other. But like many a pair of hounds that I have seen approach each other with a growl and then run off side by side together, this rencontre ended in words of love. Six years ago Shaf wrote a book in Berlin maintaining and Mr Crutcher an intermediate probatima state for the heathen. It was intended by the Phil^a Classis, through D^r Berg to make him recant or "show him up." He however was too noble for this. He maintained that his views had greatly altered; that he does not believe in any probatima state, nor that any man can be saved except by faith in Christ, who must be offered to him as an object of faith. We think it possible - suggests it as a hypothesis, which he confesses he cannot support from Scripture, that God may in some cases work a predisposition to faith in the heathen and offer Christ as its object after death; as in the case (if so) of Children. Berg offered a resolution "that D^r Shaf be requested to reconsider his hypothesis;" which D^r S. refused as he said he wished not to have the subject brought again under review in his mind as he disliked his own conclusions & had more important matters to expediate. At this stage many of the Synod began to suspect that they sympathized with D^r S.'s hypothesis and looked queer at each other and dropped the whole matter.

D^r Nevins still talks & publicly too of the "Supernatural efficacy of the Sacraments" and as modestly as ever. Young Romberg of Easton (a prominent man) openly declared that unless Baptism availed something, he had baptized his last subject. He had said so in private some several times. Himer of Baltimore (one of the instable opponents of the Papists) read a string of resolutions calling the attention of the Churches to their baptized members & all united with him on their papers. Now strange enough while averring the coincidence of their views, Himer's position was totally subversive of Nevins's. He maintained that since the Covenant was with Abraham & to his seed, & as those of his seed who were not circumcised (i.e. baptized) were to be "cut

off," (i.e. excommunicated!) from among the people, — the influence is that children of pious parents are Church members by birth, not by virtue of baptism. Which of course flies directly in the teeth of Herin's Supernatural efficacy &c. All however went on & off so smoothly that any fire that threatened to blaze up was at once trampled out and a potent calm reigned when the Synod adjourned. Romaine & Vermillion, the Dutch Commissioners proposed their pleasure & satisfaction & that they would be glad to be so.

But that is so firm & fearless, and Bay so fiery and old-fashioned and gullible in a certain sense that perhaps at this very time some new man's nest has set him into his fiftieth passion and is driving his pen one paper to be sent to some public journal for trouble next fall. I have no sort of hesitation I said in asserting my belief that the dominant tendencies at Merceburg are incipient puseyite. Shaped a young man, say 25, hands some & modest, speaks English with great effort and awkwardness; a man of undoubted talents, an intellect of the first order, a passionate lover of the truth and considerably improved by the trials he has been subjected to ~~in the Peninsula~~. He lectures wholly in German & has therefore but a small class.

I went thence to Chambersburg where our own Synod sat, Yerman in the Chair. It was a meeting of unusual interest & feeling for Wilson the foreign mission to Allahabad gave them long accounts of his orphan house, and his rearing of 70 children and in the great dearth, & their subsequent settlement in a Christian village of Carpet & tent weavers. A whole afternoon & evening was devoted to it and again on Sabbath it came up among the children, and has left a deep impression on Synod & town. Missionary Conventions are to be held this winter in all our presbyteries, at which Mr. Wilson & Lewis will be present. It is a new & excellent idea. — But I am getting tired of writing. I feel symptoms of an attack of bilious fever, which God forbid for I am among strangers or friends whose friendship is all skin deep. Dear David I have learned the hollowness of friendship very young. May you never learn it.

The present wonder of the Day & I think the most marvellous result of
modern science is the discovery of the new planet by Le Verrier & Galle.
Wks of labour, the medal of the Leg. of Honor. Le Verrier found out its
place ~~for~~ by calculating where it ought to be to produce the known
perturbations of our solar system, supposing a planet nearly to
exist. He then sent on to Galle at Bode in search for it and
it was found, within 1° of the spot assigned 3200 mill. miles
from the Sun and 50,000 miles diameter. Can the mind
of man suggest anything more wonderful than this creation of
the inductive process in the celestial science? It fills me
with awe. Lord Rosse's telescope ~~is~~ on an exploring expedition
into unknown regions and has developed already much of interest.
Not little that to you or me seems new?

I must however cease or I shall show you how I nod by
my sleepy letters. Horace says, 'tis true, that Homer sometimes
nod'd; but Homer had it as good a friend to write his chaperonies
to. The electing are all going whig. Penn^a New York, Mass.
Ohio, con Iowa, all whig; victory effected by Tariff and War
Combined. Webster has come out against the war. The Radicals
call us all traitors because we lament bloodshed and wish
to cause an unjust war to cease. Santa Anna is concentrating
all Mexico upon San Luis Potosi & laying waste the whole terri-
tory of 500 miles, between it & Monterey (now in Taylor's hands),
over which Taylor with 5,000 men must march without water,
into the heart of an enrag'd & desperate people. Kearny, after
erecting a provisional gov^t at Santa Fe, has started with as
small a force as possible for California, which is also in
our hands & under our flag. No doubt 2/3 of all Mexico will
be annex'd. News from Europe announce the marriage
of princess Louisa of Spain with Montpensier; England
has protested and declares, no child of the parties shall
ever mount the throne of Spain. The old feeling between
Eng. & France is quite at an end. Canton Geneva has
suffered revolution. The enormous steamer Great Britain
is on shore coast of Ireland. D'Exp was aboard & describes
the scene. Yours affectionately Peter,